

05/24/2007

Dear Friend:

This Memorial Day, as we do every year, we solemnly remember those men and women who have given their lives in service to our country. On this weekend, our sons and daughters who fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, and those who have served this nation before, will be in the forefront of our minds. But after this three-day weekend, as we plan summer activities and embark on vacations, the sacrifices of our military personnel must not drift from our thoughts.

Duty and honor are easy words to say, but it is rare that an individual is forced to confront whether they are truly bound by such values. Our American soldiers live each day with these virtues. They find themselves on the front line in defense of our nation and they rise to meet the challenge, whether serving at home or overseas.

With the loss of each soldier we feel an absence here at home. Yet we know that their loss was preceded by the oath to "defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic." These heroic Americans gave their lives to fulfill that oath. That is duty. That is honor. And this Memorial Day, we recognize the greatness of such dedication.

We must also not forget that Memorial Day is meant to be a day of hope for permanent peace. In 1952, President Harry Truman suggested that Memorial Day was "an appropriate time for each American, according to his own religious faith, to beg Divine aid in bringing enduring peace to a troubled world." These words are as fitting today as they were more than 50 years ago. Our inherent hope is that the spread of freedom and democracy will bring peace throughout the world, that one day we will have peaceful cooperation among all people.

Please join me this Memorial Day in remembering the fallen. We honor their memory with our thoughts, and our sincere appreciation and condolences go out to their families.

Very Truly Yours,

Tom Udall
Member of Congress